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A GRUMBLE FROM PATERFAMILIAS.

I AM Paterfamilias, aged fifty, hard-working, with not a large income; and though usually a modest and retiring individual, I desire on this occasion to place myself and a few simple household hardships before an attentive (and perhaps) sympathising public. I live with my wife and family north of the Border, in a county-town whose name I shall for several reasons suppress; my means, as I stated before, are not ample; but with as kind a partner and as fine children as ever fell to the lot of man, I am still rendered unhappy, ay miserable, by a series of domestic nuisances, which take away the enjoyment I should certainly experience in these aforesaid treasures.

My household consists of my wife and five children, whose ages range from sixteen to eight. We live in a roomy house, with a pleasant garden at the back of it, and some pretty flower-beds in front. We have two domestics—cook, who is elderly, rheumatic, and sour (though faithful); and a young housemaid, who is being trained, and who is pleasant of face and (considering the life cook must lead her) very good-natured. My wife is comely, very much younger than myself, and is moreover devoted to me. I will go even further than this, and say that I am equally devoted to her! Our children are all that fond parents could wish them to be; and to the casual beholder no possible element of discomfort seems to lurk in our quiet home. Yet strange! from my poor wife's very devotion to me and to her children, emanates that fatal skeleton in the cupboard, 'worm i' the bud,' and crumpled rose-leaf, which is I feel fast undermining my domestic comfort.

The case is briefly this. Exactly four months ago a person came to our town and gave cooking lessons. My poor wife, anxious to make our very moderate income go (as she said) twice as far by commissariat-economy and good management, attended these cooking lessons, and ever since has presented me with messes positively too awful for description. The first few days of all sorts

of curious dishes, passed by quietly enough; I made no remark, ate what I could of them, and without fuss or observation (as I thought) rejected the rest. But when my wife, excellent creature, put down or caused to be set before me on a certain day a certain white soup whose ingredients she proudly assured me were clarified dripping, milk, potatoes, and sago, things reached a climax.

Of course it was peculiar, as might have been expected. But being of a hopeful turn, I looked forward with calm anticipation to the next course; for having a hearty appetite born of hard work and long hours, I fondly dreamed that what was positively nasty might be reserved at least for another day, and that I was about to get something eatable *now*. To my utter amazement, there succeeded to the soup (so called) a small covered dish of—I could not tell what sort of things. At first sight they looked like gigantic ill-shaped curl-papers, such as used to adorn the heads of our maiden aunts some forty years ago. On closer inspection, I found that they were mutton-chops rolled in batter and fried—forming, after being so manipulated, a dish at once highly indigestible and, to my plain taste, excessively revolting. I expostulated gently with my well-meaning but mistaken wife, shewed her the folly of attempting to make soup without stock, and mildly insinuated that the plain juicy chop of our first married years was a luxury compared to this hideously disguised meat. My wife, at all times grieved to offend me, promised never again to serve up such objectionable food, and the repast concluded with a small plate of cheese fritters, which were so tough that I rose next morning quite unfit for my breakfast. Next day at dinner I was rejoiced by the sight of some plain brown soup made after my own directions, and followed by a neat little roast of beef, which in its turn was superseded by a custard-pudding.

My unfortunate stomach having now by dint of plain dishes recovered its tone, my wife confined her experiments for a while to the production of extraordinary viands for the young folks'

one o'clock dinner; in consequence of which experiments my youngest boy Johnny fell seriously ill, and had to receive several visits from the family doctor, thus increasing the family expense. Esculapius declared that the boy had succumbed to a certain awful pudding, the component parts of which were grated lemon-rind, suet, currants, and raisins. Of this the unsuspecting youth ate largely, to the subversion of his inward man and the consequent disturbance of the household. In the midst of Johnny's illness cook gave up her place, very naturally observing that as she could no longer cook to please her mistress, and that lady came down to the kitchen to do her work and make compounds of her own, she thought she would look for another situation. Of course cook said all this in her native Doric, and with many contemptuous remarks about 'slaisterin' dishes that weren't fit for the pigs!' But delicacy and consideration for the reader's feelings forbid me to speak broadly of the way in which that sagacious woman expressed her outraged feelings. Of course I sided with cook, though I did not say so; and when she left, I added the douceur of a pound to her wages, earnestly hoping that she would find a home where old-fashioned cooking was patronised and 'none o' these kickshaws' encouraged.

After this, no cook could be found, and there ensued a miserable period of dinners which scarcely deserved the name. Sometimes my wife cooked, sometimes the housemaid tried what she could do; but their efforts, either joint or otherwise, were not crowned with success. My dinner-hour, once a pleasure, was now looked forward to with serious apprehension; my home felicity was becoming thoroughly undermined; and when a friend invited me to dine at his house, I did not decline on the plea that my wife expected me to dinner at five, but took him at his word.

One evening on my arrival at home I found the household in a state of consternation (I had been dining out that day, and returned about eight o'clock). My wife was ill, the doctor was up-stairs, the children looked scared and white, and the household aspect of cheerfulness which generally greeted my arrival was changed into a sort of terrified gloom. Instinct prompted me to inquire hurriedly what they had had for dinner, when my eldest daughter informed me that they had dined on onion-soup with force-meat balls, carrot pie, potato fritters, 'and a new sort of jam-roll which mamma learned to make last winter.' This was enough. I rushed wildly up-stairs, and in broken sentences asked the kindly doctor what he thought of my wife's illness. He is a man of few words, so he said briefly: 'Your wife is the victim of an experiment; she has a very bad fit of indigestion.'

I was not at all surprised at this; and resolved that during the next two or three days our food should be of the most simple description; which resolution I was the better able to carry out, seeing that my wife was ordered by the doctor to remain in bed and support nature on weak beef-tea and arrow-root. Jane the housemaid I found was really a tractable creature; and having spoken to her seriously on the advantages to be derived from well-boiled potatoes, tender beef-steaks, and well-roasted joints, she managed to turn out some very respectable dinners. All this time no cook was to

be found who would come to us in our extreme need. One and all refused, because they had heard that the 'mistress was never out of the kitchen,' 'that she stood over the cooks when they were dishing the dinner;' and so forth. As for myself and children, we felt quite well and happy. Of course we regretted the absence of 'the mistress;' but no doubt the rest from 'experiments' would benefit the good lady; though a panic seized me lest she should be concocting some fearful mess in her own mind, to be hereafter dispensed to her too confiding circle, when she should once more come down-stairs.

She did come down. And from that time I do think the well-meaning (though still mistaken) little woman has tried about every dish under the sun. She thinks she is improving; and I am once more the victim of potato fritters, Brazilian stews, heavy pastry rolled round innocent beef or mutton, and all kinds of abominations. For the fine well-boiled and mealy potatoes of my youth I cry in vain; for the juicy beef-steak, tender, and swimming in its own rich natural gravy, I sigh uselessly; those days are past; and except at the house of an old-fashioned friend, the plain wholesome dishes of 'auld langsyne' delight me no more. What my wife may end in being or doing I am afraid to think; she has just told me with a jubilant air that she has engaged a cook at twenty pounds a year, who says she can do everything needed by a family of moderate requirements 'without being superintended!' Certainly her wage is not—in our humble sphere—moderate, but fills me with horror; however, *nous verrons*, as the French say. Let me hope that she is a 'plain cook,' as I do not desire any other sort.

What a very extraordinary thing it is that so few cooks can boil a potato, an egg, or green vegetables properly. Why is it that in the houses of the poor you find the best-boiled potatoes? In the mansions of the great they are usually hard as cannon-balls, and but too frequently cold before coming to the table. I remember as a child going often to visit an old woman who was very badly off. Some benevolent lady or gentleman had sent her a present of potatoes. She had a little three-legged pot with a funny lid, and out of it came the most delicious potatoes I ever tasted. Positively they might have graced the table of an Irish king. I can remember their flavour yet; with nothing but salt, an emperor might have dined on them. Large, mealy, and boiled all through, and 'in their jackets,' it was one of the greatest treats of my boyhood to receive one piping hot into my open and unhesitating palm. Where will you find such now? except still at the firesides of the poor.

The teaching of new-fangled cookery is all very well in its way, but I should like to see the well-bred neat little woman who conducts her experiments before a tolerable audience, teach in the first place the making of simple, wholesome dishes; and above all, shew ignorant people how to boil a potato, make good broth, soup, and porridge; also instruct them to roast meat without scorching it, and fry fish well and appetisingly. Then she could go on to experimental dishes, and now and then a household might go in for 'kickshaws,' by way of a foil to enhance the value of the old-fashioned dishes.

In France, where economy rules and the most is made of everything, the most exquisite little titbits are produced at very little cost, and cooked at the expenditure of a handful of charcoal. But here, joints of meat are too often burned to a cinder and stews ruined because cooks *will* use double the quantity of fuel that is necessary. Here, *Materfamilias* if she attempts anything light or dainty, generally fails; in France, every woman however poor is a cook by nature, and gives a grace to the humblest dish, simply because she is tasteful and intelligent. The French nation expends in the two items of food and fuel about half as much as the English and Americans, and with better results. If there was a training-school for women-servants before they go into service, and if each was compelled by Act of Parliament to go through a regular course of instruction, then I and many other afflicted husbands and fathers could look forward confidently to dinner-time as to an oasis in the desert of daily life. I would suggest also that in this case cooks would be worth the wage they demand, and *Materfamilias* need not in that case spoil her fair complexion or pretty hands in the kitchen. Of course a mistress should be able to tell an ignorant servant *how* to cook, if she comes and asks advice; but a well-trained cook will not require this, and though I do not admire fine ladies who are above working, yet a mistress need not be 'always in the kitchen.'

I shall conclude this with an anecdote of long ago. A bachelor and spinster gave a large ceremonious dinner-party. They were hospitable and kindly folk, and the lady in particular was most anxious that all things should be 'done to a turn.' Just five minutes before dinner was served, the hostess looked at her watch, and rising quickly, slipped out of the room down to the culinary regions. Remaining there till she had tasted and superintended the dishing of sundry good things, she hurriedly left the kitchen, and telling the servant to announce dinner, she gracefully apologised, on entering the drawing-room, for her absence. As she did so, she became aware, poor lady, that she had forgotten to remove a large and rather dirty servant's apron with which she had invested herself, and with an exclamation of 'O mercy, I've forgotten to take off Jean's 'brat!' she retired hastily, covered with confusion. ('Brat' is broad Scotch for a servant's apron.)

THE HAMILTONS.

CHAPTER XL.—ANXIOUS MOMENTS.

The wild Australian black is perhaps the lowest known type of humanity. His skull shews a low development of intellect, his body a low development of physique. His mode of living is wretched in the extreme, for he lacks the capability of building a sufficient shelter either from the scorching sun of summer or from the keen winds and heavy rains of winter. And yet it is possible to find even a lower grade of being than the Australian black in his native ignorance and filth, namely the same black after he has visited some of the colonial cities. When he has associated with the offshootings of one of the large towns, when he has added to the brutality of the savage the lowest

vices of civilisation, then indeed he becomes a hopelessly degraded creature, a thing for angels to weep over and for mankind to mourn.

You will not wonder then, that when Phyllis encountered the look of this man, and took in at one glance the expression of his fierce eyes and repulsive mouth, even her brave spirit quailed, and the blood seemed to ebb from her cheeks and throb to her heart with a wild terrible pang of fear. It so happened that only a few weeks before, the colonial papers had rung with the accounts of a murder which had been committed at a lonely shepherd's hut on the hills. The shepherd was out at his work, far beyond earshot of his dwelling, and his wife had been left alone in her solitary dwelling with her infant child. A party of wandering blacks came to the hut; and when the unhappy man returned in the evening, he found his hut a scene of desolation, and his dear ones brutally murdered. The whole colony was moved to horror at the dastardly deed—a deed which was only partly expiated by the execution of the ringleaders. Phyllis had read this story in the papers; and during the few seconds in which she stood confronting the black, it flashed upon her in all its terrible details. She thought of her delicate sister, of the infant, of little Bertie, and she was conscious that their lives as well as her own hung upon her tact and courage. But though those thoughts were written on the brave pale face, the girl never lost for an instant her haughty bearing, or quailed before the insolent stare of the black. With an imperious gesture, she pointed to the spot by the water where the others were already preparing to light a fire and were hacking the sheep to pieces; and the man turned sullenly away.

When she saw that he had rejoined his companions, she went into her own room, and gave way for a little to a violent emotion which shook her from head to foot. She felt giddy and sick, and for a few minutes was in that painful state when consciousness is only retained by a strenuous effort of the will. It must have been during those few moments of weakness that the girl's heart cried aloud and found utterance at her lips. 'Jack, Jack, Jack!' she murmured, and then covered her face with her hands and was silent.

It was only for a little while, however, that the weakness triumphed. Going forward to the looking-glass, she smoothed her hair, and tried to bring back a little colour into her white cheeks. While lingering for a few moments on the threshold of the sitting-room, Bessie was struck on looking up from her work by the curious set paleness of her sister's face.

'Phyllis darling,' she said, 'do you know you are looking very ill? You must have over-tired yourself this morning. Come here and sit beside me, pet, for a little, and rest your head on my pillow.'

'Yes, presently,' answered Phyllis, as she moved

restlessly about the room for a few minutes, under pretence of tidying away Bertie's toys. And then she did what Bessie had never seen her strong sister do before; she went to the cupboard, poured out a glass of wine, and drank it.

'You are ill, Phyllis,' said Bessie, raising herself from the sofa in alarm.

'No; indeed I am not,' answered Phyllis, coming to her sister's side, and resting her head on the sofa-cushion. 'Don't be anxious about me, Bessie. I am only a little tired; and when Judy Maloney comes back, I mean to live the idlest and most luxurious life possible.'

'I wish she were here now.'

'So do I!' ejaculated Phyllis, with what seemed to her sister unusual energy.

Bessie began talking of some little household reforms that were to be effected when Judy came back. The beds and windows were to have fresh curtains; and Robert had promised a new carpet for the sitting-room. 'And a piano, Phyllis! Robert has positively said that a piano is to come up in the next dray from Adelaide! If I have not forgotten all the little music I ever knew, I shall give you some lessons.'

Much as this might otherwise have interested Phyllis, the kindly words were lost upon the girl as she listened with strained attention for any sound from outside which might betray the presence of the blacks to her sister. 'Shall we ever need those things?' she was thinking. 'Will our lives go on just the same after this? Or when James and Robert come back to-night, will they find us?—Would Robert go mad, she wondered, if he came back and found his darling, his idolised wife, as that shepherd's wife had been found? And Jack? Would he remember only what was best in her, and forgive and forget all that had jarred on him?'

'But it shall never be!' she said to herself desperately. 'I have strength and courage; and God helps those who fight for the innocent.' She rose from her low seat presently, and declaring she was quite rested, announced her intention of preparing dinner for the little household.

'Don't trouble to cook anything,' called Bessie after her. 'Anything cold will do for us to-day, and you do look so tired.'

Glancing for a moment at the calm domestic scene—the delicate pretty young mother, the infant's cradle, the strong healthy boy dragging his toy-horse about the room—Phyllis again repaired to her chamber, where she offered up an agonised prayer to the Father of all mercy. When she rose, she looked and felt perfectly calm. She opened the drawer in which she had put away Jack's little pistol, took it out and examined it, to make sure that she remembered all that he had told her about its method of working. It was, as I have said, a revolver of the smallest size, and of the most beautiful workmanship. As she looked at its glittering barrel and costly mountings, she reflected with a curious sort of satisfaction that in this exquisite toy, which she could easily hide in one of her strong hands, death might be dealt to six human beings. 'Four of them,' she thought, while the lines about her mouth deepened and her eyes glittered. 'One for Bessie, and myself last. As for the children'—

Loading the pistol carefully, she slipped it into the side-pocket of her dress; and then, before

going to the kitchen, she went to reconnoitre the unwelcome guests. She walked along the bank for a little way, and stood looking down at the blacks, herself unseen. They had eaten as much half-raw mutton as it was possible for even them to consume, and their capacities in that direction are simply enormous; and now they were drinking the brandy, some out of tin pannikins, which they had doubtless procured at the last town they had visited; and others in a still more primitive fashion, from the bottles. Some of the men seemed to be already satiated, and were lying flat on their backs, with closed eyes and faces upturned to the sky. Two or three others, among whom was the tall black who had followed Phyllis to the house, and for whom she had conceived a special aversion, were still sitting up, and carrying on the debauch, as if determined to get as much enjoyment as possible out of the unwonted abundance. As for the women, they had withdrawn to some distance, and were squatted on the ground, their knees drawn up to their chins, and blankets or opossum skins thrown over their shoulders. Probably they had already received the small share of brandy which was all their lords could see fit to spare them. Altogether the aspect of affairs looked tolerably promising, thought Phyllis. If only those two or three inveterate toppers would give in and go to sleep, or if only Sam would take it into his head to return to the homestead. Never had she longed for the sight of a human being as she now longed for a glimpse of that awkward youth. She turned to scan the brow of the hill behind the house, hoping and praying to catch a flutter of his old jacket or a peep of the top of his brimless hat; but nothing living broke the green outline of the slope. Nothing remained but to watch and wait till the western sky should begin to redden and she might listen for the roll of the bullock-drays in the distance, and for the well-known tread of Jack's gray horse.

Calling fortitude to her aid, the brave girl went about her household work, preparing nourishing soup for Bessie's dinner, feeding Bertie, setting the kitchen in order, and baking scones for the men, who would return hungry and tired in the evening. The hands of the Dutch clock in the kitchen seemed to stand still, and two or three times she went up to it, to listen if its slow heavy pulse were still beating on. Every now and then she stole out to where she could see the blacks, and as the afternoon wore on she noted with thankfulness that they had at length succumbed to the potent liquor, and were lying quiet and apparently asleep.

The kitchen clock tolled the hour of four, and Phyllis thought, 'In two hours more Robert and Jack may be here.' She was dwelling on this idea with a feeling of relief, when going to the outside corner of the kitchen to glance towards lake and hill, as she had done so many times already that day, she saw something which made her brave heart stand still for a moment. The tall black had risen from his recumbent position and was now stealing slowly towards the house with a stealthy step and sidelong glances, which told of sinister meaning. Either he had drunk less than his fellows, or else, as he was evidently the strongest of the party, his potations had taken less effect upon him. At anyrate, on he came;

and the pale girl realised with an intense vividness of conviction that the hour of her deadliest peril was come. It was only for an instant that she quailed; the next she had stepped forward to meet him, determined at any cost to prevent his nearer approach to the house. Stepping forward to within about six paces of him, she stopped, and demanded to know his errand, drawing herself up to her full height. 'How dare you come near the house?' she exclaimed. 'Go back to the others at once!'

The black-fellow grinned, but stopped his cat-like advance. Phyllis saw that he carried his club in his right hand, which he held partially concealed behind him; and she knew that if he came near enough, a blow might place her at his mercy. For more than a minute they stood confronting one another. Phyllis's hand was in the pocket of her dress, holding what she had hidden there, and her eyes held the burning orbs of the savage, as the hunter holds the eyes of a wild animal about to attack him. It was of all which she held dear that the girl was thinking as she stood there during those few terrible moments—of life and honour; of her delicate sister and the new-born babe; of merry little Bertie, the pride and pet of the house. She knew from the expression of the black's face that he meant mischief, and drawing the revolver from her pocket, she took deliberate aim.

'If you come a step nearer, I will fire!' she exclaimed.

Perhaps the native had never before seen so small a weapon, and did not believe it to be deadly; or perhaps he had never seen a woman use a weapon of any kind; for he only grinned again and advanced a step or two. There was a flash, a report; and Phyllis saw through the smoke her enemy lying before her, wounded and bleeding. A mist swam before her eyes; she felt a deadly sickness stealing over her; and through all the giddiness and strange noises which rang in her ears, she was conscious of the galloping of a horse urged to its utmost speed, coming ever nearer and nearer. In another minute Jack's arms were round her, and she was looking into his face with a long gasping sigh.

'Speak to me, Phyllis! What is wrong?'

'The blacks,' she answered; 'they have been here all day. But it is all right, now you have come,' with a shuddering look towards the wounded man. 'Have I killed him?'

'Killed him? No! You have winged him though, very neatly. The scoundrel!' and Jack's dark eyes scintillated with anger. 'He deserves more than that. Come inside, my brave child; you are as pale as a ghost.'

Phyllis was trembling like a leaf now; but she managed to smile into his face. 'Never mind me. See, there is Bessie looking from the door; go and take her back to her sofa.'

Jack went to the back-door of the parlour, which Bessie had managed to reach, and from which she was gazing with a very scared face. He lifted her in his arms and carried her back to her sofa, soothing her with assurances that all danger was over, that Robert and the men would be home directly, and that there was really no harm done. Bessie strove hard to suppress the hysterical sobbing natural to her weak state. 'Send Phyllis to me,' she begged. 'Oh, how brave she has been all day! I know now why she looked so pale and

strange in the forenoon! And she bore all the anxiety without saying a word to me.'

Phyllis came into the room, and kneeling down beside her sister, laid her face against her shoulder. 'It is over now,' whispered Phyllis. 'Don't be frightened, darling.'

They listened with strained ears till they heard the rattle of the drays and the voices of the men outside. Then Phyllis slipped away to her own room, where she lay down, and fell into a state that was partly unconsciousness partly sleep. From this she was roused by the settler's well-known voice; and opening her eyes, she saw Robert bending over her, and loading her with all manner of tender names.

CHAPTER XII.—'I OFTEN WONDER THAT YOU DON'T ADMIRE PHYLLIS!'

I will let James Hamilton tell his own story, as he told it that evening after the blacks had gone, all except the wounded man, for whom a pallet had been made up in one of the outhouses. Tea was over, and the members of the reunited household were gathered in the parlour, regarding one another with thankfulness for perils past. Bessie reclined on the sofa, with Robert close beside her. Bertie had gone to bed, and the infant was asleep in the cradle. Phyllis sat near the table in an easy-chair which Jack had drawn forward for her; and as the lamplight fell on her face, it revealed a look of rest that comes with relief from a long strain of feeling. At her side Jack stationed himself, her willing slave.

'We had been busy all the morning—Robert and the two men and I—driving in the wooden piles for our jetty and removing some stones out of the way. Between eleven and twelve o'clock I felt tired; for the work was harder than any I had ever done before, and we were all hungry. We got out the basket with our dinner in it, and spread the things on a green knoll about two dozen yards from the place where we had been working. Robert and I were very merry over our dinner; and afterwards, while the men were having theirs, we strolled off to a grassy bank near, and lay down to enjoy our pipes. As I have said, I was tired, and lying quietly there, I fell into a sort of doze. I don't suppose I had slept many minutes, when I was wakened up suddenly by Phyllis's voice calling me. I heard her distinctly, as surely as I ever heard anything, call my name three times. "Jack, Jack, Jack!" she said; and she did not speak very loud either, but in a sort of intense whisper. The idea conveyed to me was that she was in great distress and trouble, and that she wanted help sorely. In a moment I was broad awake, and I suppose I looked rather scared; for Robert shook me by the shoulder and said: "Hollo, old man, have you had a bad dream?"

"It wasn't a dream," I said. "I heard Phyllis call me."

'Bob shouted with laughter, and began teasing me about hearing a lady's voice six miles off; but I could not shake off the strange uncomfortable feeling that the dream, if it was a dream, had left on my mind. I would have started off home then, only I thought Robert would banter me so. But all the afternoon the feeling that there was some danger hanging over you and Bessie and the

children was so vividly before me, that about three o'clock I went to Robert and said: "Bob, I must go home. There is something wrong there."

"He didn't laugh then; but told me that if that conviction was so strongly present with me, we had better yield to it, and that we would all go at once. I galloped on first, and he promised to follow with the men as quickly as he could make the dray-horses go. The dray being empty of the wood-piles, it would go pretty fast. You know, Phyllis, just how I found you. And I think that if ever a vivid impression such as I have told you of comes to me again, I will not try to fight against it, but obey the impulse at once. It is one of those mysteries which we cannot possibly explain, a sort of mesmeric influence which comes now and again to us mortals."

"There is one thing I should like to know," said Robert—"did Phyllis really call Jack at the time he heard her voice?"

The colour rose in Phyllis's pale face like a flood, and her sweet eyes drooped to hide the dew that stood in them.

"Did you, Phyllis?" asked Jack eagerly, bending nearer to her.

"Indeed, I did," she answered truthfully. "I remember quite well when I did so. It was in my own room, soon after the blacks had come. I believe I felt frightened for a little and lonely, with you all away."

"Frightened and lonely!" exclaimed Robert enthusiastically. "I should think you did! There isn't one woman in a thousand who would have kept her courage as firm and her brain as clear as you did, Phyllis. But it shall never happen again, my brave girl. I will never leave my house again with only women and children in it, and no man within call."

They sat there talking till a later hour than usual; and even when the time came for saying good-night, they lingered still, loath to part from each other even for a little while. Robert carried Bessie to her room, and came back to hold Phyllis in his arms once more, to kiss and bless her, to call her the brave defender of his home, his courageous clever sister. Jack stood by smiling; and when his turn came to say good-night, he would fain have touched one of those white cheeks with his lips; but the girl drew shyly away from him and retired for the night.

Remaining with Bessie till she slept, Robert sauntered out, feeling as if he could breathe more freely in the open air. He found Jack pacing up and down by the moonlit lake, not even smoking; a sure sign of great perturbation. Robert joined him in his walk, and the brothers paced backwards and forwards for a time without speaking. At last Jack said in a low voice: "I don't know how *you* feel, Bob, but the thought of all that has happened to-day nearly drives me mad. The idea of those two girls here alone exposed to the savagery of those wretches, is perfectly horrible."

Robert drew a deep breath, and his face looked pale in the moonlight. "It is too horrible to think of. But it shall never happen again, Jack. I cannot think now how I came to be so careless. I suppose years of security have made me feel over-safe. If it had not been for Phyllis—Jack, hasn't that girl behaved splendidly?"

"Yes, she certainly has," answered Jack dryly.

Robert was silent for a little, glancing curiously at his brother. "I often wonder," at last he said, hesitatingly, "that you don't admire Phyllis more. To me she is the most perfect woman I have ever known."

"Yet, though you admire Phyllis, you love Bessie best?"

"O yes; of course," he said, smiling. "You know that Bessie is my idol. But that does not keep me from feeling that Phyllis is a splendid woman. Not one girl in a thousand would have had the courage and presence of mind to act as she did to-day."

Jack turned away his head and gazed far across the lake in silence. When he spoke, his voice was low and unsteady. "Bob," he said, "I don't know if you will understand what I am going to say. I have been on the point very often within the last few months not only of admiring Phyllis but of loving her passionately. I know that in my heart I do love her, better than I shall ever love any other woman. She is beautiful and good and generous. It is impossible to conceive a nobler character than hers. But the very things that you praise in her are what make me afraid. Marriage is such a desperately serious affair; it means the happiness or misery of two lives. And I cannot help asking myself, are courage and presence of mind just the qualities which I desire most in a wife? In fact, am I capable of being to this brave grand creature the king and lord that a man ought to be to his wife?"

"Upon my word, Jack," said Robert passionately, "I fail to understand you!"

"Now I will tell you the difference between your Bessie, and Phyllis—between your position and what mine would be," continued Jack. "Bessie is the weaker of the two. You feel that you are everything to her; that she leans upon you for strength and support, that she trusts to you for guidance. I on the other hand could be nothing to Phyllis. Her head is as clear as mine, her heart as proud, her courage as high. We might be friends, as *men* are friends; we might be good comrades, walking side by side through life, with never a word of difference; but the gentle clinging truthfulness that a man longs for from a woman could never be mine. She needs nothing; she is self-reliant; in herself, sufficient to herself."

"Why did she call you to-day, I wonder?"

"That, I cannot tell. I wish I *could* tell. If she were not so cold to me always, I would ask her. If I saw one touch of womanly weakness about her, I believe I should love her passionately."

"I think she has a touch," said Robert; "only she has the instinct of all brave natures to hide the weakness. At anyrate," he added somewhat dryly, for he felt annoyed, "I do not think she has the weakness to give her heart where it would not be appreciated."

"That is rather cruel, Bob," returned Jack in a low tone. "You know—at least—well no, I suppose you don't. If I thought for an instant that she cared about me—things would be very different. But I truly believe that she cares just as much about me as she does about poor Sam."

"Hm!" said Robert, smiling, as he turned towards the house. "I'm not sure that her indifference goes quite so far as that. At anyrate you are humble enough about it. Good-night, old fellow."

But Jack continued his restless walk by the lake for many an hour afterwards. The moon had set, and the chill that comes before dawn, had begun ere he turned in.

INDIAN NAMES OF AMERICAN STATES.

It must be owned that such well-known titles as Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Spotted Tail, Two Bears, Little Wound, Blue Nose, Little Big Man, One Horn, Young-Man-Afraid-of-His-Horses, do not suggest any very dignified or awe-inspiring associations, although the 'braves' of the prairie would doubtless find equal food for mockery in Smithville, Jonesborough, Indianapolis, and other astounding appellations which stud the transatlantic map from east to west. It is nevertheless interesting to note how many of the most famous names in America are of Indian origin. The long supremacy of the Dutch and French in the eastern and northern districts, and that of the Spaniards in the west and south, have indeed left indelible traces; but a large number of the yet older names used by the aboriginal possessors of the soil are still familiar as household words, though all memory of those who gave them has long since lapsed into tradition.

Commencing with New York itself, we find the island on which it stands still retaining its ancient name of 'Manhattan,' given by the Manhato Indians who formerly held it—though Washington Irving, in that wonderful burlesque which has immortalised the name of 'Knickerbocker,' derives the title, with an infinitely ludicrous affectation of learned research, from 'the wearing of *men's hats* by the squaws of the surrounding tribes, whence "Man-hat-on." Of the thirty-eight states composing the American Union, nineteen are still known by the quaint fanciful appellations bestowed upon them by their ancient inhabitants. Connecticut, slightly altered from its original form of 'Quon-eh-ta-kut,' is a Mohican word signifying 'long river.' Massachusetts implies 'the land around the great hills.' Michigan is the Indian name for a fish-trap, suggested by the peculiar form of the great lake which has given its title to the surrounding country. Illinois was formed from the Indian word 'Illini' (men) by the addition of the French termination 'ois.' The stormy region of Minnesota merits its name of 'cloudy water,' as does Wisconsin, with its many rapid streams, that of 'rushing channel.' The appellation of Iowa, signifying 'the draway ones,' however appropriate to its original owners, is amply contradicted by the energy of the sturdy farmers who are fast peopling its endless plains. The name of Missouri (muddy) has seldom been more justly applied than to the famous tributary of the Mississippi, which latter was styled with equal truth, by the once powerful 'Natchez,' whose name still survives in that of a local town, 'The Father of Waters.'

Those who have travelled through Ohio can judge for themselves with what justice its Shawnee possessors called its noble river 'the beautiful stream.' Indeed, the rivers of the various states have very frequently stood sponsors to the states themselves. Tennessee implies 'the river with a big bend;' Kentucky—'Kain-tuk-ee'—'at the head of the river;' Kansas, 'smoky water,' which, with the French prefix 'arc' (bow), gives a name like-

wise to the adjacent state of Arkansas. Alabama, in the tongue of the Creek Indians, signifies 'the land of rest.' The name of Wyoming, or 'great plains,' originally given by the Delaware Indians to the beautiful Pennsylvania valley traversed by the northern branch of the Susquehanna, has been transferred to one of the most noted states of the Far West. Dakota ('allied') was so called from the great confederacy of the north-western tribes, better known by their generic name of Sioux. The Utahs or Utes gave their name to a western state which has since become famous as the adopted home of the Mormons. The name of Texas, hitherto supposed to be of Spanish origin, proves to be the generic title of the various tribes inhabiting it, like that of Sioux or Iroquois. Indiana implies simply 'the Indian country.'

The titles of the other states tell their own story, the western names being for the most part Spanish in their origin, the eastern either English or French. The state of New York was named after the Duke of York (afterwards James II.) when taken from the Dutch by England in 1664. Sir George Carter, one of the original proprietors of New Jersey, marked his affection for the beautiful island of which he had been governor, by giving its name to his western possessions. Thomas West, Lord De la Ware, one of the earlier governors of Virginia, stood sponsor to the state of Delaware. Virginia itself was named after Shakspeare's 'fair virgin throned by the West,' Queen Elizabeth. Another English queen, Henrietta, the wife of Charles I., gave titles to two states—Maine from her native French province, and Maryland from her second name of Maria. Her royal husband was god-father to the Carolinas, as was George II. to Georgia, and Louis XIV. to Louisiana. New Hampshire was christened after the English county of that name; and Rhode Island from its supposed resemblance to the famous island of the Levant, although some authorities derive it from a corruption of 'rood' (cross). William Penn gave his name to Pennsylvania as its founder; and the French complimented the beautiful hills of Vermont with the title of 'Verts Monts' (green mountains), whence the Vermonters are still familiarly known as 'Green-Mountain Boys.'

The traces of Spanish conquest are still visible in the titles of Florida (flowery), Nevada (snowy), Colorado (red), Montana (hilly). California is a much disputed title, its first appearance being in the Spanish romance of *Esplandian*, where it figures as 'an unknown region of vast extent, inhabited by female warriors, black and terrible to look on.' The recently incorporated Territory of Nebraska takes its name from the Nebraska or Platte River, which traverses it from north-west to south-east. The derivations of Arizona, Idaho, and Oregon are uncertain.

Of the other Indian appellations still in familiar use, only a few can be given within the limits of the present paper. Niagara, now a household word in every part of the earth, is slightly corrupted from Oni-aw-ga-rah, 'the thunder of waters.' The grandest of the western valleys retains its native name of 'Yosemité' (Grisly Bear), while its most picturesque cascade is still called 'Pohomo' (the Wind Spirit). The beautiful lake which is the admiration of every traveller, has preserved its Indian title of Tahoe; while the Potomac, Susquehanna, Wabash, Missouri, Mississippi, Kema-

wha, Ouachita, Penobscot, Suwanee, Cheyenne, Kennebec, Rappahannock, Saskatchewan, and a multitude of other rivers, continue to retain their beautiful appellations and to defy all the efforts of modern Vandalism.

A RIVER-DREAM.

MILE-END was a small country town; but such a town! The houses were packed and pressed and crowded together, making them look as though they would suffocate for want of air. Then they were so dilapidated and faded and tumble-down, it seemed a wonder they kept up at all. To look at them at a distance you would think, from the queer way the roofs all slanted and leaned towards each other, and a trick some of the houses had of poking up inquisitive-looking dormer gables and windows in quite unexpected places, that they had some important secret that they were whispering about and hobnobbing over. And then the narrow crooked streets, with their seas of mud, and filthy gutters, and debris-littered side-walks, the very stones of which had a dissipated rakish air, as if instead of lying quietly in their places and doing their duty, they could do nothing better with their time than go knocking about in a disreputable fashion, to trip up unwary passengers. And then the odours! Surely Cologne itself never boasted a larger and more extensive collection; at least, for the sake of its luckless inhabitants, let us hope so.

A more unhealthy, undersized, dirty, gossiping, miserable, worthless set of human beings surely never existed anywhere. The men were mostly out of work and drunk, the women lean and ragged and unwomanly, and the children little and weird and wolf-eyed. Many was the drunken brawl and scene of brutal violence that awoke the midnight echoes of the streets, and Fever and Malaria unmolested, stalked abroad. Within, the houses were as uninviting as without—with a separate family on every floor, sometimes within every room. What wonder that the health and the morals of the place should be at a terribly low ebb!

And what seemed to make it all more painful and pitiful, was the loveliness of the valley in whose lap lay this pestilent little town. The green flower-gemmed meadows were so fresh and fair—the air was so fragrant and balmy—the birds sang so sweetly—the little flowers were so brilliantly hued and so daintily formed—the river and its many shady back-waters and tributary streamlets were so fresh and bright and sparkling, and the murmuring music that they made blended in such sweet harmony with the tinkling of the sheep-bells, the lowing of the cattle, and the clear ringing note of the skylark, whose bit of a body seemed a mere speck far away against the blue. It lay, this lovely valley, like a glorious picture, nobly framed by purple shadow-swept hills, and overarched by heaven's cloud-flecked blue.

But though rich in beauty and healthful with heaven's breezes, it yet clasped a canker-spot of corruption to its breast; like a beautiful woman whose soul is worthless and diseased. Very few of the miserable inhabitants of Mile-end, not even the children, ever found their way out of the noisome atmosphere of the streets into the purity and

beauty of the woods and fields beyond. Like the grub that tastes of the nut it feeds and batters on, the dirt and squalor and poverty of the place seemed to grow into the hearts and minds and natures of its people, and to rub out all capacity for enjoying what was better and purer than themselves.

And yet even here, brutal and degraded as were the many, in the few, terribly small as that minority was, might be found high and noble instincts, that pushed themselves up through the poisonous soil, and groped painfully upwards and onwards to the light. Even here, as everywhere, might be found instances (rare perhaps, but still there) of brave patience, endurance, and heroism under great stress of suffering and misery and wrong. Then too, although in most of those poor semi-savage breasts, vice and sin had nearly elbowed out any virtue that nature might have originally planted, it must not be overlooked that great as the sin was, as great was the suffering; and who shall say, if these poor souls had been born into the clover of this life, as regarded their physical and moral surroundings, what fair and delicate and beautiful blossoms might not have expanded and bloomed in their natures!

Mile-end was a very old as well as a very dirty place, and one particular house in its principal street stood forward into the road several feet beyond its neighbours; its upper story quite overhanging the basement. This house was so old that it almost tottered when the wind blew—as it often did at Mile-end—even in spite of the wooden props, themselves rotten now, with which it had been buttressed up. But in spite, or perhaps because of its age and discomfort and general dilapidation, it was beautifully mellowed and harmonious in the tone of its colouring. Tufts of vivid green moss, and yellow and gray lichen, at intervals carpeted and softened the red tiles; and hardy clumps of orange wall-flowers filled up the gaps left by departed bricks and mortar; thus throwing over the actual decay and rottenness a glamorous veil of picturesque beauty. Within, this house was cruelly old and cold and comfortless; the beauty of decay was all outside, and only its stern reality existed within the frail and draughty walls. There were ten rooms in this house, which gave shelter to seven families. The noise and brawling were incessant, never seeming to stop night or day, for when at last the sickly children were asleep, the night was made hideous with the drunken blasphemies and low quarrels of the degraded men and women; and the reeking air was thick and heavy with gin and tobacco and disease.

In one of these rooms—it was in the projecting upper story, which through an unusually wide window commanded a view all up and down the street—lay on a straw pallet on the floor, barely covered with an old patchwork quilt, a boy of about fourteen, who, judging from his constant cough, laboured breathing, and emaciated limbs, was in the last stages of consumption. Beside him on the narrow bed lay a girl a few years older than her brother, fast asleep. She was pale and thin and dirty; but there was a rare beauty in the firm soft curves of the mouth and chin, and in the low broad brow, up from which was swept a thick tangled mass of curly brown hair. Tears glistened on the long brown lashes, and the eye-

brows were knit together in painful frown, which suddenly relaxed as the sick boy watched her with tired sunken eyes, and a sudden glowing smile lighted up her face.

'She can allus dream, and escape to the beautiful world she tells me about,' he muttered with a wistful impatient sigh; 'and I can never even sleep.'

Yes, she was dreaming, but not so deeply but that the movement and sigh of her brother woke her. 'Whaten's the trouble, Harry dear? Be yo worse to-night?'

'O no,' he said, and sighed again. 'I was just a-wonderin' where yo was, yo smiled so; and I longed to be there too.'

'O Harry, I was 'way off, out o' sight o' houses an' streets an' such-like, all alone in the valley; an' all the trees an' the flowers an' the river spak to me, to give me comfort.'

'Ah! the valley,' said the sick boy; 'that's where I wants to go, as I used to, 'fore I was took bad. If I could sleep, 'praps I could go too.' Here he was interrupted by a terrible fit of coughing, which only left him strength to gasp feebly for 'water.'

A cracked cup without a handle stood on the window-sill, and in it was a little water. The girl rose to get it; but as she was handing it to her brother the door opened, and their father staggered in. For an instant he looked at his children, and in a drunken fit of senseless passion, struck the girl a savage buffet which made her reel, and shattered the cup into fragments in her hand.

The girl's brow flushed crimson with anger and pain, and her brown eyes flashed fire. 'Yo miserable drunken brute!' she said.

'None o' yer sarce, gal, or I'll kill yer!' and he glared at her dangerously, with arm uplifted to strike.

'Faither, faither!' commanded rather than implored the sick boy, sitting up with an effort, and holding out a thin pale hand between them, while a hectic red blazed in his cheeks and vivid light shone in his sunken blue eyes. 'Don't yer strike her—don't yer strike her, or God will strike yo!' There was a strange almost unearthly look in the boy's spiritualised suffering face that awed the man into temporary soberness.

As he paused with arm uplifted, looking at his son, an expression of shame and uncertainty crossed his features; he hung his head, avoided the boy's intense eyes, and his arm slowly dropped by his side.

'Faither,' said the boy in a gentler tone, 'yo've hurt her—yo have, and she's so good to yo.'

The man shifted uneasily from one foot to the other, and looked up at his daughter, who was standing defiant and angry, with a dull red mark on her cheek and neck. When her brother spoke, her face softened and her lips quivered; she knelt suddenly by the bed and put her arms round him, saying in a piteous voice as the big tears fell on his yellow hair: 'It's no for me I mind! It's for yo. Whaten will yo do the night through withouten water? There's no a drop more i' the house nor the street.'

The boy said nothing as he stroked his sister's brown head, but the wistful longing look in his eyes, and the half-sigh he could not repress, shewed how much he needed the water. The man

looked at them for a minute, and then the fumes of the gin he had taken overpowered him again as he reeled to the opposite corner of the room, where he fell on to an old mattress, and in a moment was fast in a deep drunken sleep. The boy closed his eyes wearily and turned his face to the wall. The girl kissed him and settled him as comfortably as she could, then rose from her knees and went to the window, which she partly opened. The moon was high and full, and the street without looked as bright as day. A sudden idea seemed to strike her, for she smiled brightly as she went softly to the bed and stood gazing at the brother she loved so well, and knew she should be able to keep so short a time.

'My boy!' she said, with an intensity of pitiful love in her face, and stretching her clasped hands out over him as though she would keep him with her in spite of everything. 'My boy! he is all I have,' she murmured. 'Dear God, take care of him till I come back;' and with the love still in her face she softly left the room.

She went out into the brilliant summer night, and walked swiftly down the street towards the lovely valley beyond, looking up at the quiet stars as she went, something of whose peace and rest seemed to be reflected into the depths of her usually troubled eyes. After a while she left the town behind her and walked rapidly through the fields and lanes and woods till she came to the river's brink. How lovely it looked! The trees and flowers and grasses seemed outlined in purest palest silver—a very fairy network! and the quietly flowing river sparkled and shone with the glorious radiance of the moon and the stars. The girl sat down on a stone that projected into the river, and filled a jug she had brought, with the cold sparkling water which she had come to fetch for her brother. She seemed spell-bound with the beauty of it all, and sat there quite a long time looking down at the reflections deep in the water, and now up to the sky far above her head. 'If only my boy could be here,' she thought, 'how happy he wud be! Maybe he wud get well if he comed here—he loves the dumb nateral things so.' Her tears fell into the clear rippling water. A little breeze sprang up, and tiny wavelets, silver bright, lapped up and up over the stone to her feet. 'O river, dear river!' she said, leaning towards it, 'last night in my dreams yo spak to me, pitied me, and was sorry for my boy. Can't yo spak agin now?'

The wavelets rose higher, and murmured and whispered in the wind; and as she listened, the silvery inarticulate sounds resolved themselves into words.

'Child,' the river said softly, 'the sweet spirits that live beneath my waves and in the woods and trees there, brought you to me in your sleep, and we tried to comfort you.'

'Why did yo not bring my brother too and comfort him?' the girl said. 'He's sore in need.'

'He would not sleep,' the river said. 'But take him some of my water to drink, and he will sleep, and you will both come to me in your dreams, and I will cure him and make him well.'

'Ah! you wull?' cried the girl—a beautiful light and brilliant smile waking her face into a wonderful beauty. 'I wull go to him at once! Where be the spirits who talked so kind to me last night?'

'Oh,' said the river—and it seemed to smile and ripple all over in the moonlight—'you will see them again when you come with your brother in your dream.'

The girl refilled her jug, nodded brightly to the river, and hastened home with feet winged with hope and love. She found her brother awake and gasping for breath. 'Harry, Harry!' she said, tenderly leaning over him, and raising him on her arms. 'See! I've brought you some water, all fresh and pure out of the river.'

His faded eyes brightened, and he eagerly drank it, and then with a smile lay back on her breast. 'That's fine an' nice,' he said. 'How did'st go so far? Thou's a good lass, to go for me.'

'Yo didna miss me whiles I were gone; did yo, Harry?'

The boy looked up at her with a loving smile and tear-filled eyes: 'I allus miss yo, little sister, when yo's not wi' me.' She bent over him and passionately kissed his pale lips.

'An' now,' she said, 'yo mun go to sleep; an' I'll go too; an' yo'll wake up right an' fine an' well to-morrer, an' yo'll never be sick no more.'

'Wull I no?' said the boy, smiling up at her eager face. 'Yo looks lovely to-night—like an angel,' he said; and added after a minute, still smiling: 'I can sleep now. Yo mun lie down by me—so, and put your arms round me—so; an' now kiss me, little sister!'

The moon streamed in on them as they lay, clasped in one another's arms, fast asleep, their lips almost touching, and the brown and gold of their hair shining in the light.

Harry woke first in dreamland, to find himself sitting on the bank of the river in the moonlight, waiting for his sister; and as he waited, all nature seemed to wake just to welcome him. The trees that waved their stately arms and silvered foliage above him, whispered: 'Welcome! welcome!' The little pollard-willows down by the water all nodded and spoke to him some cheery word; the sleepy flowers who sat swaying and nodding on their stalks, opened their brilliant eyes to smile at him; and even the long graceful grasses and rushes rustled and bent and bowed towards him, and did all they could to express their good-will. The very frogs stopped croaking to look kindly at the sick boy, with their bright eyes; and the crickets ceased rubbing their legs for a minute. 'Oh, how good it do feel to be here!' he sighed, and fairly laughed for joy; and all nature seemed to take up the echo and laugh too for company; and the frogs and the crickets croaked and chirruped louder than ever; and the bats took up the falsetto parts in the chorus; and the nightingale sang a solo that thrilled him with its beauty.

His sister came then, wandering along by the river, bright and happy, and sat down by him. 'Harry,' she said, kissing his thin cheek, 'yo wull get all well agin now; wull not yo?'

And the river answered, tossing a tiny wreath of shining spray on to her lap: 'Yes, yes; he will, he will!'

'Harry,' said the girl, clasping her hands together, and looking up at the blue dome overhead, where the stars were shining and twinkling—'I feel so happy now, that it seems somehow I c'd die just for nothin' but joy. Be yo not happy too?' and she laid her soft cheek against her brother's.

'It be all just so sweet an' glorious, sister, that I cannot find the words to put it into—I can on'y feel it here,' and he clasped his hands to his heart.

'Get up, get up,' sang the river, 'and come with me.'

So they got up and followed the twistings and bendings of the stream hand-in-hand. The girl noticed that at every step his walk became lighter and more buoyant; a warmer tinge flushed into his pallid cheeks; and his eyes seemed to have caught the radiance of the stars. As for her, she went bounding and dancing along by his side, a very impersonation of youth and health and happiness. In their joyous progress they were never left alone. From behind every tree they passed, and from the tender heart of every flower, and up from the silver water, beamed the cheery faces of dryad and hamadryad, elf and water-nymph, and every face had a blessing in it. As for the river itself, it chattered and prattled and laughed all the way. There never was such a talkative river. Its spirits were so high that every time the wind murmured and rustled a kindly wish through the trees, it curved and coquetted and dashed up arrowy silver-pointed darts of water all round and about the boy and girl.

At last, after wandering for a long happy while beneath the stars, they came to a lovely moss-and-flower carpeted dell in the wood, overarched by branching trees, whose foliage made a wonderful lacey pattern against the gold-spangled blue above, and in whose lap the river lay, a clear deep emerald pool, on whose translucent surface bloomed numberless water-lilies, open to-night against their custom, to do them honour, and whose pure white blossoms, with their snowy moon-brightened petals and golden eyes, rose immaculately perfect from the noisome impurities beneath, and sat queen-like among a tangled network of long pink stalks and shining green plate-like leaves. The brother and sister stood still by the water's brink, feeling hushed and awed by the great calm beauty of the place. As they stood there silent, the boy so thin and fragile and spiritually fair with the new radiant light as of another world shining in his blue eyes, and the girl in her sweet strong beauty reminding one of the water-lilies at her feet, in that they were both so fair and had equally sprung from muddy impurity and filth—they seemed emblems of spiritual and material life. The river scarcely murmured now, but just whispered as the trees waved gently in the breeze: 'Children, I have brought you home to the spirits who love you. Good-night, good-night.' Then the children saw that they were not alone, but that two figures clothed in long flowing draperies sat beneath the drooping trees. They were both beautiful exceedingly; but the face of one was as the face of an angel, glorious with an infinite peace and joy; while the face of the other, though beautiful, was sad and drawn and tear-stained, as though with passionate suffering and pain.

'Children,' said she with the sad solemn face, as they stood before them silent and awed, 'we have been waiting for you to-night—my sister and I; and she smiled. The girl looked at them, and instinctively shrunk away from the beautiful sad being who had spoken, and went close up to the other, whose eyes were fixed beaming and smiling on her brother.

'Yo are so beautiful,' she said, 'an' look so bright and happy. Wull yo make my boy well, so he can enjoy hisself to the fields and woods?'

Then the spirit with the radiant eyes rose and beckoned to the boy. 'I have come to take your brother home,' she said, 'where he will be well and joyful always.'

'An' may I no come too?' the girl asked, putting her arm round her brother's neck, as if to keep him with her. 'I cannot live withouten him!' Her mouth quivered, and the tears welled up big and bright into her eyes.

'My child,' the spirit answered softly, 'you cannot come with your brother now—the time is not yet. Some day I will come for you, and he will come with me to welcome you. But now, my sister wants you still, and has work for you to do.'

The girl turned and looked timidly up at the sad-eyed spirit, who said: 'Yes, my child, you belong to me; my sister has called your brother from me. In that, he is happier than you. But I will love you too. You need not fear me, if you will only trust me and be brave. Will you come?' She held out her arms to her; and the girl, touched and attracted by the sad face, went towards her, and said, still holding her brother's hand tightly clasped in her own: 'I am not afeared o' yo, an' I wull trust yo; but I cannot give up my boy!'

'But you must!' the sister-spirit answered.

In spite of her glowing beauty, the children both felt that her will was inexorable.

'Sister,' said the boy, 'yo mun let me go; I feel her drawing me, an' I cannot stay. I wull be so happy. An' yo wull come to me. Kiss me, an' let me go!'

She turned and clasped him passionately in her arms. 'I wull let yo go,' she sobbed; 'but it be so hard, so hard! We was so happy together.'

'I be so tired!' he murmured as he leaned supported in her arms, with his head against her breast, and his lips close to hers.

The radiant-eyed spirit approached them and took the boy by the hand. 'Come!' she said gently. 'I will take you home.'

'My boy! my boy!' cried the girl piteously; and for a moment, as she held him fast in her strong young arms, it seemed as though her love were deep enough to keep him in spite of the spirit's call.

'Sister, let me go. I wull come again to yo, an' fetch yo.'

Then with a moan, she loosed her arms and kissed him and let him go. Then the spirit wrapped the boy in her garments, and kissed him solemnly on brow, and eyes, and mouth; and behold! beneath the power of that embrace, his face brightened into health and life and beauty; and the immortal radiance that breathed from the spirit's form fell upon him and glorified him. And as his sister gazed wonderingly at him, the spirit took him by the hand, and they disappeared from her sight. Then she with the saddened eyes came to the girl and bent over her as she wept, and whispered, laying her hand on her brow: 'Be brave, and fear not!' and then she too vanished.

It was morning, and the sun was peering curiously in at the window of the queer tumble-down house in Mile-end. And this was the sight it

saw. The father was still breathing heavily on the floor; and on the bed, the brother and sister still lay close clasped in each other's arms. Her breathing was soft and regular, and her cheeks were wet with tears. On his face shone a radiant smile, for his was the sleep of death!

PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF A SHOWMAN.

SECOND SERIES.

IN No. 685 of this *Journal* we published some reminiscences in the life of a showman, supplied to us by the showman himself. The following are what may be termed a continuation of the series. Our friend writes as follows:

Before relating a few more of my adventures, I think an explanation of some of my principal fire-tricks may perhaps be interesting. During my engagement with Spicer, I was, as I have already stated, announced as 'Victor Delareux the Fire-king;' and though it was presumed that I was a proficient in the languages of the continent, I of course knew not a word of English; consequently Spicer performed the part of talking exhibitor somewhat in this strain: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I introduce Monsieur Delareux in his unequalled feat of swallowing boiling oil. There is no deception. This is an ordinary saucepan, without any preparation. The oil is as hot as it can be made. I pour the contents of the pan into this goblet.' (The goblet was an old laboratory mortar of gun-metal, which drew away much of the heat from the oil.) 'He will now take a stick of lead and stir the oil until it melts away.' (The metal was not lead, but a compound in which bismuth predominated, and which may be procured in the form of teaspoons at any of the principal dealers in magical toys. These spoons will dissolve in a cup of tea or coffee.) 'The lead is melted; he will now drink the oil.' At this point I took a spoon, in shape like a punch ladle, but with a much longer handle. Having filled this, I took two turns down the front of the stage, to let the audience have a near view. I then took a wine-glass, apparently of the ordinary size, but only holding the contents of a thimble, filled it from the ladle, and drank it off with much show of suffering through the intense heat; but heat there was really none. By this time the oil in the mortar was comparatively cool, and I indulged in a few glasses more of the nauseous stuff.

Another performance was supping a bowlful of burning brandy. The bowl, which was of the commonest stoneware—the management could not afford anything superior—I placed on the table before the audience; the brandy, being first tested or rather tasted by one or two of the 'front seats,' I poured into the bowl, and set fire to it. When the flames flashed high, I dipped a dinner-spoon into the brandy, and seemed to fill it; when I took it out of the brandy, I inverted the bowl of the spoon, and held it blazing before my open mouth; as I was closing my lips upon it, a gentle breath blew out the flame, and nothing entered my mouth but the slightly heated spoon. This fire-supping required to be done speedily, to prevent the spoon becoming overheated. Unknown to the audience, I used another spoon for my next sup, to give the first spoon time for cooling; and

I continued supping until the flames died out; finishing the feat by drinking off the small quantity of harmless liquid that was left.

In these above performances no preparation of the mouth was required; but in those I am about to describe, I rendered my mouth and skin much less sensitive, even to great heat, by a continual application of liquid borax to the first, and by anointing the second with a preparation of distilled water, sulphuric acid, and onion-juice. Having thus made myself as it were fireproof, I was prepared to eat any quantity of tow, and afterwards blow volumes of smoke out of my mouth, the inside of which was lighted up with a glowing red-heat. This I obtained by slipping a piece of red-hot charcoal powdered with sulphur between my teeth, having previously inhaled a long breath, and then breathing smartly, and thus shewing a small mass of blue-and-red fire. Some may think that the sulphur rendered the trick more difficult and dangerous; but its action was quite the contrary. In swallowing molten lead, which was not lead, but the compound already mentioned, I poured the metal out of the crucible into the palm of my hand; allowed it to rest there for a second or two, by which time it hardened into a lump; and then I shewed it on my tongue, and appeared to swallow it. Under the pretence of wiping my lips, I easily removed it unseen. I need not repeat what I mentioned in a former article about dancing on a red-hot bar or passing it over my limbs. When the booth was well filled, I sometimes wound up my entertainment with dropping melted sealing-wax on my tongue, making an impression on it with a seal, and giving the impressions away to the élite of our patrons.

In my early showman days the only medium of advertising was the bellman of the town or village, who was paid for his services by a free admission for himself and family on the first morning or evening of the performances. We often also had recourse to an indirect method of advertising our show. When not engaged at the booth, our usual resort was the largest and most popular tap-room of the neighbourhood. Many a time have I astonished, and sometimes terrified the natives by taking with my bare fingers a red-hot coal from the fire and lighting my pipe with it; and then carrying it round to the gaping countrymen, offering a light to each.

Of course I was always in a condition of professional preparation during my reign as a Fire-king. One evening, after a successful performance at Uxbridge, I entered a tap-room in the little town. I had hardly sat down before I was requested, as being nearest the fire, to give it a stir up. A glance round convinced me that I was going to be made the victim of a plot. I seized the large ball which formed the handle of the poker, and which I saw at a glance had been previously heated to redness for the benefit of the first unsuspecting comer. The trick was at that time much in vogue, and never failed to elicit shouts of derisive laughter at the expense of the victim. The poker was cooling down from red-hot. I stirred the fire leisurely. 'Don't you find it rather hot?' remarked the lumpy host, winking to his neighbours. 'Not at all,' I replied; 'not warmer than I could have expected it near such a jolly fire. Feel it yourself.' I placed the ball in his hand. He uttered some strong language,

and danced round the apartment, slapping his singed hand on his thigh, much to the delight of the assembled yokels.

It was at this same town, if I recollect aright, that I performed a 'wonderful swallowing feat.' It was a trick, and the only trick I ever resorted to in the way of actual swallowing. There were many in the town who would not believe in the genuineness of my sword-swallowing feat; so I announced that I would swallow three iron rods of nine inches each in length, and not only swallow but digest them. I employed a confectioner of the town, who was a little bit of a showman in his way, to make me three rods of jujube mixture, and coat them slightly with tinfoil. At the appointed time, before a large and excited audience, I produced the sham rods, and knocking them together, made them ring in such a manner that their metal could not be disputed. The ringing was done by a brother-actor, who stood at the side-wings and rattled three genuine iron rods together. Bit by bit I swallowed the sweet stuff, thus keeping my promise and silencing the unbelievers.

On one occasion I entered a country tap-room and put down a small paper parcel on the table. Looking at the fire, I remarked to the potman that I did not think it capable of cooking a steak. He agreed with me. Then I said if he would bring me a red-hot poker from the kitchen, I could manage for myself. The poker was brought; I licked the end of it once or twice, and then, in a disappointed manner, said that it was not nearly hot enough. He offered to heat it again. 'No,' I said; 'you haven't a fire in the village that can heat it up to please me. Take it away, or I'll eat it up before your eyes.' On the following morning I entered the same public-house and called for a glass of ale. 'I cannot serve you,' said the landlady sternly; 'I am not licensed to sell drink to the Evil One!'

I may in conclusion introduce a little feat which was no trick, and which I occasionally performed. I acquired the taste and the power through practice while at Tobago. I could swallow a spoonful of Cayenne pepper as easily as if it were sugar. At a tavern parlour in Hitchin I was talking of my fondness for taking capsicums or Cayenne pepper to any amount. Unfortunately, I could not prove my words, as neither of them could be procured. Before the company parted for the night the butler of a gentleman in the neighbourhood invited me to give a performance on the following evening in the servants' hall. I did so. A banquet worthy of a Lord Mayor followed. I was made the lion of the party. Neither capon nor turkey was good enough to set before me. The cook had exerted all her powers in concocting a dish expressly for me. The dainty morsel, for it was little more, both looked and smelt temptingly. I wished to share it with the others; but that was not to be permitted. I was hungry, as showmen always are, and nothing loath to set to. The first mouthful informed my palate that the chief ingredients of the dish were Cayenne and hotter spices, if hotter there be. I ate with an appetite: no expected tears came into my eyes; I made no demand for a glass of water or beer. I left not an atom of the cook's achievement, and laid down my knife and fork satisfied with myself, and at the same time complimented the cook on her skill. A hearty laugh rung all round;

and she explained that the dish was a suggestion of the butler.

These are a few random memories. Perhaps at some future leisure hour I may recall others.

USES OF ELECTRICITY.

THE ordinary telegraph being liable to be affected by thunder-storms, Professor Loomis of Washington proposes an aerial telegraph, by which signals may be transmitted through a system of suspended kites; on the theory that currents of electricity, generally in the same plane, exist continually in the air at certain distances from the earth. These currents could, he thinks, be made to take the place of the usual suspended wires. He is said to have reduced this idea to practice, and to have communicated with an assistant at a distance of twelve miles; his only apparatus being two kites held by fine copper wires, in lieu of the usual string. Each kite was flown to a certain altitude; and when a message was transmitted by means of an ordinary instrument by the Professor, it was carried upwards through the copper wire to his kite, was thence conveyed by the natural current of electricity to the other kite twelve miles off, and thence by the wire of the latter to the operator at the other end. Should practical results on a large scale follow late experiments with kites telephones and phonographs, the present system of conveying telegraphic messages will probably be quite revolutionised. Besides transmitting the various ingenious commercial, political, and social codes of secret language, plans and topographical sketches have been sent by telegraph without necessitating a special drawing for the purpose, by means of an invention first exhibited at the French Academy of Sciences.

The value of field-telegraphs in a campaign has repeatedly been demonstrated. One of these, called a *Telelog*, has recently been devised by a Baden artillery lieutenant, M. Ackermann, which has the following general arrangement. The receiver is a simple electro-magnetic bell with single strokes, which is kept in a circuit with constant current. It is held in a box attached by a hook to the breast; and when the man carrying it wishes to signal, he presses a knob, interrupting a spring contact. The cable contains two insulated copper wires and a hemp cord to give the necessary resistance. The whole, wound with linen band and tarred, is coiled in lengths of two hundred metres on a drum of sheet-metal. The battery consists of twenty elements in a case with a like number of compartments; the zinc cylinders are screwed fast to the wooden cover, while a copper dish, filled with blue vitriol, lies at the bottom of each compartment. A twenty-five per cent. solution of Epsom salts is used as filling material. The battery will act at three thousand metres' distance; and the signals appealing to the ear, the eyes of the operator are left free for other purposes.

Passing over these remarkable instruments the telephone, phonograph, and microphone, all of which have already been noted in these columns, we go on to speak of a few of the other adaptations of this remarkable power. The uses of electricity are well exemplified in the general adoption of lightning-conductors and electric bells, and in

the beneficial effects of electricity sometimes on health and life. Among useful applications of electricity may be mentioned the electric indicator, an excellent protection against fire and thieves. It consists of two small mahogany boxes, one containing the battery and the other the bell and alarm. Three wires only are required, which may be attached by a particular arrangement to doors windows or drawers; the opening of which causes electricity to be established, and is instantly followed by an alarm. For the detection and prevention of fire, two wires in connection with a thermometer are used, one of which terminates in the mercury bulb, and the other in the tube at any given point of temperature; when the mercury reaches this point, metallic connection is completed, and any rise of temperature beyond that point is indicated by the ringing of the fire-alarm. Attention has been given to the synchronising of clocks by electricity, which transmitted from some standard clock, is so applied to the wheel-work and hands of others as to cause them to shew uniformity of time with the governing clock. As applied to music, a whole orchestra of instruments can be made to discourse sweet sounds, like the telephonic harp, through the influence of the same potent agent. But perhaps the most curious use to which the electric battery could well be applied would be the carrying out of the suggestion that electricity should be made to supersede the hangman's noose, by communicating a death-shock to the condemned criminal.

The influence of electricity on evaporation has lately been studied by M. Mascart. He placed a number of basins of water under conductors connected with a Holtz machine, driven by a water-engine, and inclosed in a glass case, in which the air was kept dry by vessels containing sulphuric acid. The evaporation was always increased under this action whether the electricity was positive or negative, and in some cases it was even doubled. While on this part of our subject it may be mentioned that the electrical properties of water vary rapidly according to its degree of purity, so that a current of electricity applied to that fluid ascertains at once the greater or less degree of resistance, and consequently of purity or impurity of the water tested. A new method of engraving on glass was not long since described by M. Planté at a meeting of the Paris Academy of Sciences. The surface of a plate of glass having been covered with a concentrated solution of nitrate of potash, and a horizontal platinum wire connected with one of the poles of an electric battery being placed in the liquid along the edges of the glass, any design may be easily drawn on the glass by touching it with the point at the other end of the platinum wire. The wire forming the 'pencil' is insulated, the tip alone remaining uncovered; and by simply using the wire as an ordinary pencil and tracing imaginary lines on the surface of the glass, the design is permanently reproduced and distinctly engraven thereon. Flat surfaces may be easily treated in this manner; but the difficulty of keeping convex surfaces covered with the nitrate of potash is likely to prove an obstacle to the general adoption of the system. This difficulty may however, it is thought, be overcome by means of a specially constructed bath.

More generally useful than the wire-pencil referred to for operating on glass, is likely to prove the electric pen, which not unlike an ordinary pencil-case in appearance, is connected by a wire to an electric battery. It passes over the paper, leaving no visible effect to an inexperienced eye; but a nearer examination shews that the course of the pen has marked itself by piercing an innumerable quantity of small holes in the paper. This result has been produced by the action of a small needle, which supplies the place usually filled by the lead, and which is thrust out of the end of the instrument by electric agency no less than one hundred and eighty times in every second. The practical uses of the electric pen are as yet slight; but future development of the principle may confidently be expected. Its greatest use at present is as a means of copying documents. The paper with its pricked writing is laid on another sheet, and an ink-roller passed over it, and the ink passing through the interstices leaves a copy on the paper below. Some half-a-dozen copies are said to be thus obtained in a minute, and as many as a thousand before the original is worn out; though whether the copies are all quite legible is not stated.

Equal advances have been made regarding the more general adoption of the electric light, which is now used alike for the peaceful pursuits of commerce and the deadly purposes of war. The substitution to a certain extent of the electric light for the dim candles and feeble oil-lamps formerly in all lighthouses, is a vast improvement too obvious to dwell upon. Many will think the same regarding this powerful light as a new ally of the photographer, since, through its means, portraits have been taken in London independent of time and season.

The brilliancy of the electric light makes an attractive illumination on festive occasions; and judging by recent experiments, its rays may shortly be expected to grow very familiar to us in many public buildings. In this respect France sets a good example; and as the economy, safety, and convenience of the electric light have been demonstrated in certain establishments in Great Britain, we shall probably not be behindhand in its general, if not universal, application. Its adoption for library illumination, and notably that of the British Museum, has been suggested, and would without doubt be hailed as a universal boon.

It is assumed that gas cannot be manufactured below an average price of two shillings per thousand cubic feet, and that a gas-burner to give the light of twenty candles must consume six cubic feet per hour. On this data, the cost of eight thousand candles' light for fifteen hundred hours, allowing twenty-four pounds for interest on the outlay for plant, would be a few shillings over three hundred and eighty pounds; but the same amount of light can be obtained from electricity at a cost of one hundred and eighty pounds. This calculation was drawn up with reference to places where gas is manufactured for many consumers; but if manufactured solely for the light required by the comparison, the cost would rise to ten or twelve times that of the electric lighting. At the same time it may be noted that the two agencies are not in actual competition, inasmuch as the electric light is chiefly valuable for purposes which gas fulfils only imper-

fectly, as for lighting up large spaces and for use in time of war.

It is admitted that there is still much to be done ere the electric light can be employed with comfort in illuminating halls and rooms of ordinary dimensions; but it can now economically be used both with regard to its intensity and colour-effect where other modes of lighting are valueless. In dye-works, for instance, the improved electric light must be invaluable; and the successful results attending its introduction into an establishment of that nature in Salford, will probably lead to its employment in similar works. A Gramme machine was, we hear, employed for the generation of the electric current; and this, driven by a two-horse power steam-engine, gave a light calculated to be about equal to six hundred sperm candles, at a total cost of fourpence an hour. Not every dye-work would need such an extensive illumination, or could afford to run the engine required. Still hundreds of establishments in London in which the impossibility of matching colours under the yellow glare of gas-light has formed a serious obstacle to business, might greatly increase the available work-hours by adopting this new means of illumination. The electric light being a perfectly colourless white, would be well adapted for illumination of picture-galleries, which are seen to anything but advantage in gas-light.

The lighting of gas-lamps by electricity has, we believe, been proved a practical success, and this method, it is probable, will ere long be adopted in large towns. In London a trial was made a short time ago of a street-lamp for electric lighting, devised by Mr Bore. The lamp is in rear a semi-hexagonal reflector, and the front is covered by a flattened convex opal glass, so that the intensely brilliant point of light emanating from the carbon-points which act as 'burners,' is not visible; but instead, a glowing white diffused light is very effectively radiated in all directions, giving a soft and very pleasant illumination of all objects in the roadway. In the electric light itself, nothing new was attempted, the old Bunsen battery being the source, and the Dubosc apparatus the manipulator of the points; it was the lamp not the light that was the subject of trial. Two of these lamps were kept in action for some hours, one at the Mansion House, the other at the Royal Exchange. With five such lamps placed in opposite directions, so as to obliterate the intensely dark shadows which the powerful rays of the electric light always produce when thrown on one side of the place to be lit up, the whole of the space between the Bank, the Exchange, and the Mansion House could be perfectly illuminated; and if the Siemens magneto-electric machines were employed, the cost would be, it is thought, considerably less than that of the comparatively feeble gas-lights which paled their ineffectual fires before those of their electric rivals.

An excellent example of the effect produced by opal glass is nightly witnessed in various parts of Paris, where the very agreeable diffusion of light is so pure in quality that colours of all shades can be nicely distinguished, while at the same time it does not subject drivers of vehicles to the inconveniences which they suffer from the glare of the electric lights hitherto presented to the public.

One immense advantage that the electric light possesses over ordinary lights such as gas or candles, is that it is independent of oxygen as a sustaining power. It burns as brightly and as long in a vacuum as in the open air. This has been taken advantage of in illuminating the depths of the sea. Electric lamps have been devised that burn steadily under water, and it is one of these improved lamps, regulating itself according to the strength of the current employed, that was used by divers in examining the sunken hull of the ill-fated *Eurydice*. When the current is too powerful, the carbon-points recede; and when weak, they approach each other, thereby keeping up a light of equal intensity; and the lamp will burn in any position. It is inclosed in a strong case, with a lens opposite the carbon-points, and a smaller one of colour to examine the light before sending under water. This casing, called the lantern, is perfectly watertight when closed, and is connected to the battery by means of a double cable of two insulated wires, the cable being made of india-rubber, and the two united by a tape covering. Fifty Bunsen elements placed in boxes of tin compose the battery, which is handier for moving about. The electric lamp, we are told, will burn for an hour in the open air; but in the lantern it will burn for twice that period, as the combustion of the carbon-points is not so rapid as in the open air.

But if electricity lends its aid in the raising of ships, it also contributes to their destruction through the ignition of torpedoes by electric wires. It is at once the bane and antidote, so to speak, in this species of warfare, since our ironclads are now fitted with electric lights and reflecting apparatus, likely to be of good service in protecting them from night-attacks by torpedo-boats. The electric lights provided on Admiral Hornby's ships are described as appearing as bright as a star of the first magnitude at a distance of thirty miles on a clear night. In this powerful light the smoke of a steam-launch betrays itself at a distance of more than two thousand yards, so that its value as a preservative of our costly war-vessels from destruction can scarcely be overrated.

Electricity however, can equally be adapted for purposes of attack as for defence, for it seems that on board ship the electric fuse is superseding the old lanyard in the firing of heavy cannon. It is, as we have on former occasions shewn, specially convenient for turret-guns, as it is not only possible to take better aim by this use of electricity, but the effect of the shots is more terrible, through the concentrated fire of a simultaneous discharge of several projectiles, which will penetrate heavy armour when single shots are comparatively harmless. As, owing to the smallness of port-holes and the nearness of guns to the water, the sighting is better performed by an officer stationed above them, he can by electric wires discharge the guns simultaneously at the moment he thinks most fit, while being likely to act with all the more coolness and judgment from being out of the way of the smoke and bustle below. As an illuminator for military purposes, the electric light will probably ere long prove equally useful. The Russian government have been experimenting recently at St Petersburg with the special object of increasing the distance to which the light produced by electricity may be thrown. The power of the light was found to be greatly augmented by covering the carbon burner

with a thin sheet of copper. By this means the Alteneck lamp was made to increase the power of its light from ten thousand two hundred and ten to sixteen thousand two hundred and fifty-five candles; and even this increased power was again raised to that represented by the light of twenty thousand two hundred and seventy-five candles, by a slight alteration in the position of the carbon and its covering. By this light, objects are clearly visible at night at a distance of three thousand yards. From such experiments it seems that the improvements in the system of electric lighting are likely to produce important effects on the arts of war and peace. Such are a few of the uses to which this strange power has already been applied; and yet electricity, like steam, may still be considered in its infancy. In a future article we shall have the pleasure of laying before our readers some further notes on this interesting subject, including what has been done and what is likely to be done in the way of illuminating large cities such as London, by electricity.

PENGUIN NOTES.

If the reader will carry his eye along the fortieth parallel of south latitude at about the point where it is met by the eightieth meridian of east longitude—or about half-way between the African and Australian coasts—he will find the two islands named St Paul and Amsterdam with their outlying rocks. These islands and rocks, on which it is difficult to land, are of volcanic origin, being in fact peaks or ridges pushed above the surface as outlets for the earth's internal heat; and round about them the dredge brings up pieces of lava and ashes and other evidences of their past history, while at no great distance the sea is two thousand fathoms deep. The continual battering of the waves has greatly altered the form of St Paul within the memory of man. In 1696 the crater was intact; but the sea now flows into it where its wall has been broken down, and a boat can row into the once fiery gulf of the volcano. Even as late as 1793 some places were too hot to stand upon; but anything like eruptive action has ceased. The seas swarm with the lower forms of marine life, crustacea, mollusca, echini, &c.; and a dead cuttle-fish was washed ashore whose longest arms measured twenty feet—as terrible a monster as the *pieuvre* so graphically described in Victor Hugo's *Travailleurs de la Mer*, and set down as the creation of an exuberant imagination, even by well-informed naturalists, at the time when that thrilling romance appeared. Victor Hugo's story has however been justified by the subsequent discovery of many of these gigantic octopods, doubtless capable of drowning the strongest man, and by some well-authenticated cases in which this catastrophe has actually happened.

Nature ever seeks to cover the waste places of the earth with vegetation. A chance cocoa-nut may be stranded on an old coral reef, and in a few years it is clothed with a fringe of these stately palms. No sooner had the volcanic fires ceased in St Paul's and Amsterdam, than a few water-borne seeds germinated; and in 1874 the botanists who were attached to the Transit of Venus expedi-

tion found more than fifty species of plants, excluding those of the lowest order, flourishing here. These plants will prepare the soil for more noble occupants; and as the shores become sloped by the unceasing action of the sea, favourable opportunities will occur for the lodgment of still higher forms of vegetable life. Recent experiments so clearly prove the vitality of various kinds of seeds after long immersion in salt water, that we are disposed to attribute the origin of vegetation on islands situated as these are, mainly to the agency of the sea in transporting to them the germs of plants which are to clothe their volcanic nakedness.

About the month of September, the beginning of the summer in these latitudes, albatrosses, 'Cape pigeons,' &c. resort to these solitary islands for the purpose of nesting; but the innumerable penguins which, from their incapacity for flight, are the permanent residents, are among the most interesting, because they form a commonwealth, and exhibit considerable dependence upon one another in the rearing of their young. The business begins with the laying of one or two eggs, never more, of a dirty white streaked with brown, in a hollow on the bare ground or on a little grass. The task of incubation is shared by both parents; the one 'off duty' going to the sea to feed itself, and when the young are hatched, returning in due time with a supply for the family. Where tens of thousands of nests are collected together so closely that the visitor cannot walk without demolishing new-born nestlings or eggs at almost every step, it is difficult to understand how each bird knows its own nest, eggs, or nestling, as appears to be the case until the young are able to walk about for themselves. Then the latter form into 'infant schools,' presided over by several matrons, and ask and receive food from any charitable passer-by, and the social system, so far as it goes, has attained its highest point. There is no longer any recognition of *meum* and *tuum*, but a determination on the part of each adult to do the best for the rising generation, without regard to the petty rights of property so stoutly maintained and hotly contested in the egg stage. Woe betide the incautious or over-confident experimenter who shall remove one of these fierce motherly things from her nest with his hands; the penalty will be a succession of stabs, which produce notoriously painful wounds. But the occupant of the nearest nest will always receive and tuck under her, together with her own brood, the young of a dispossessed neighbour. All through the nursery are well-beaten paths along which the birds hop in single file with most grotesque action to and from the sea; and from the nests on either side come sharp stabs at the legs of the intruder, a deafening roar accompanying his progress the while, and an odour assaulting his nose which only those who have sailed in a guano-ship can realise.

The time has now arrived when the young must be taught their first swimming-lessons, and the rudiments of that aquatic life to which their special structure confines them. From the rookery to the sea they advance, hopping with both legs together, and jump feet foremost bolt upright from a ledge into the water. Then, and only then, are they thoroughly at home, and making use of nothing but the powerful scaly flippers, dart

about with the rapidity of a fish. Frequently the old bird will rise to the surface with a young one balanced on each flipper, maintained in its precarious position by the grasp of its own tiny paddles, and no doubt vastly enjoying this introduction to life and the novel experiences to be met with under water.

Watching this busy scene from a boat, we are suddenly reminded that penguins do not find life one long holiday; for at no great distance from the sporting multitude we can see ever and anon rising above the surface the unmistakable triangular back-fin of a shark, stealthily approaching the revellers. They have observed the enemy as soon as we, and in a moment not a bird is to be seen. They have dived with one impulse to the bottom, where the tyrant cannot easily seize them, and are hurrying for their lives to the shore. The effect of the simultaneous re-appearance of thousands of the ungainly creatures scuffling up the beach with a deafening clamour is most singular; and we peer down into the water for signs of the tragedy, if any has been enacted; but the shark is nowhere to be seen, and confidence being re-established, the birds are soon at their gambols again.

A gentleman who passed some days sketching in the Falkland Islands had many opportunities of observing the penguin population; and he declared them to be the most intelligent, impudent, and inquisitive of the feathered tribe. He planted his camp-stool in the densest part of their 'rookery,' where they crowded about him, picked the buttons off and frayed the tails of his coat, walked about his drawing materials, and altogether behaved themselves as if he had been sent for their special entertainment. Fear there was none, or rather it was all on the side of the man; for nothing but an occasional vigorous use of a walking-stick enabled him to maintain his ground, and finish the beautiful series of water-colour drawings which we had the pleasure afterwards of examining.

The structure of these birds should not be passed by without a word of comment, so admirably adapted is it to their mode of life. The fore limbs—which in most other birds are wings—are flattened out into a pair of broad swimming-paddles covered with scales, enabling the bird to follow its prey beneath the water with a swiftness, grace, and ease contrasting remarkably with its awkward movements on land. The feet are broad and partially webbed, and the leg is modified in order to give stability to the body. Provision is made for long-continued diving by enlargement of the veins, which thus retain and act as reservoirs for the vitiated blood until it can be renovated by breathing. The bones are filled with oily marrow, and the feathers are exceedingly compact and well adapted to resist water. When moulting, the penguin avoids water, and the feathers come away in patches instead of singly; the whole process resembling more nearly the shedding of a snake's skin than the moulting of a bird. Fashion has not spared the penguin! At one time its skin was in great request for ladies' muffs, and is still, we believe, extensively used for many purposes of ornamentation.

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